

Washington, D.C. (May, 6, 2013)—Today, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, issued the following statement regarding recent allegations relating to Benghazi:

“I believe Congress should conduct investigations—particularly those involving our national security—in a bipartisan and responsible manner, and that whistleblowers must have the ability to come forward to Congress and be protected from retaliation when they report waste, fraud, or abuse. I also believe Members of Congress have an obligation to actually investigate claims before coming to conclusions and making public accusations. Unfortunately, House Republicans have taken the opposite approach. They issued a partisan report with reckless and false accusations against the former Secretary of State, they have completely concealed Mr. Thompson from Democratic Committee Members, and they have failed to make even basic inquiries to the Intelligence Community, the Defense Department, or the State Department to vet specific allegations. Instead, they have leaked snippets of interview transcripts to national media outlets in a selective and distorted manner to drum up publicity for their hearing. This is investigation by press release and does a disservice to our common goal of ensuring that our diplomatic corps serving overseas has the best protection possible to do its critical work.”

A partisan Republican staff report issued last month [falsely suggested](#) that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton personally signed a State Department cable reducing security in Libya—a claim that drew immediate and widespread condemnation and was awarded “

[four pinnochios](#)

” from the Washington Post Fact Checker. Rather than retract this false report, House Republicans continue to appear on national television defending its discredited claims.

With respect to the hearing on Wednesday, Committee Chairman Darrell Issa has withheld from Democratic Committee Members all information about Mark Thompson, Deputy Coordinator for Operations at the Bureau of Counterterrorism, and his potential testimony. Democratic staff have been excluded from all discussions with Mr. Thompson and his attorney, Joseph diGenova. As a result, no information has been provided about Mr. Thompson’s potential claims and—importantly—no effort has been undertaken to evaluate the context or potential merit of those claims.

On April 11, 2013, Committee staff conducted a transcribed interview with Gregory Hicks, who served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Tripoli, Libya during the attacks in Benghazi. At the time of the interview, Mr. Hicks requested that his identity not be revealed, and the Committee

honored that request. This week, Chairman Issa announced that he invited Mr. Hicks to testify in public at the hearing on Wednesday. On Friday, Democratic Committee staff attempted to discuss the content of Mr. Hicks's public testimony and any potential concerns that Mr. Hicks would have about the public release of his interview with Mr. Hicks's attorney, Victoria Toensing, but she refused to do so.